that infiltration is further minimised and violence levels in J&K remain under check.

Government is monitoring the situation closely, and has made it clear to Pakistan that the premise on which the present dialogue process is continuing is based on the commitment of January 6, 2004 by Pakistan not to permit any territory under it's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. In the Joint Statement made during the visit of President of Pakistan on April 18, 2005, both countries reaffirmed, *inter alia,* the commitments made in the Joint Statement of January 6, 2004. This issue is also highlighted at the DGMO level talks held from time to time.

Requirement of submarines

1784. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present requirement of submarines to effectively defend the country's borders and how many the Navy have at present;

(b) whether it is a fact that a number of them are due for retirement and no decision has yet been taken to replace them; and

(c) what action the Ministry propose to take in this regard in view of the time lag involved in manufacture/procurement of submarines?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The Government has an approved long term perspective plan for the indigenous construction of submarines and acquisition of national competence in submarine building to meet the requirements of the Indian Navy.

The review of force level of Indian Navy is an ongoing process keeping in view the prevailing security environment, threat perception, emerging technologies, decommissioning of ships/submarines and availability of funds. Steps are taken by the Government to meet any deficiencies to ensure full defence preparedness.

Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA)

1785. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Armed Forces are not in favour of diluting the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), which provides immunity to security forces during anti-insurgency operations;

(b) if so, have the recent unfortunate happenings in North-East been taken into consideration, alleging its wide-spread abuse by the security forces by the National Human Rights Commission and similar other Bodies; and

(c) since 1958 when AFSPA was promulgated how many cases of its abuse/misuse have come to notice of Government and whether any security personnel have been punished therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Provisions in the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) have been incorporated to enable the Armed Forces to operate in the areas which are affected with insurgency. The Armed Forces are sensitized to ensure that no violation of human rights takes place while they are deployed under the AFSPA to tackle insurgency. A Human Rights Cell has been established in Army Headquarters to monitor and investigate the allegations of human rights violation by the Armed Forces. In case, charges of abuse of the provisions of the Act are substantiated, those found guilty are given strict punishment. The legality of the provisions of the AFSPA has also been upheld by the Honourable Supreme Court of India.

Following an agitation in the State of Manipur after the custodial death of Thanjam Manorama Devi in July 2004, a five member Committee was constituted on 19.11.2004 to review the AFSPA. The Committee has submitted its report to Ministry of Home Affairs in June 2005.

After the establishment of the Human Rights Cell in the Army Headquarters in 1993, records indicate that there were a total of 342 allegations of Human Rights violations by members of the Armed Forces in the North East. Out of 318 cases investigated, 290 allegations have been found to be baseless. In the remaining 28 allegations, 63 Army personnel have been punished with penalties ranging from life imprisonment, dismissal and censure.